



*Headquarters of the  
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March 30, 2009

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf  
US House of Representatives  
241 Cannon Building  
Washington, DC 20515-4610

RE: Gang Grant Funding for FY10

Dear Congressman Wolf:

As Chairman of the Command Board of the Northwest Virginia Regional Drug Task Force and the Northwest Virginia Regional Gang Task Force, I want to extend to you, on behalf of the Board, our sincere appreciation for your hard work and diligence in securing FY09 funding for the Gang Task Force. The FY09 Gang funding will ensure that Investigators assigned to the unit will be provided with the necessary financial support to carry on the tasks of suppressing gang participation in the region's schools, investigating criminal gang activity, and monitoring and combating gang violence in our communities.

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Since its conception, the Northwest Gang Task Force has operated in a proactive manner. Educating school students about the dangers of gang participation has been at the forefront of the unit's goals and objectives. Identifying gang members and associates also is a major priority.

The Task Force's Gang Investigators are adept at gathering and documenting information about gang members and associates. In fact, in early 2009, it is the Gang unit's familiarity with local gang members that resulted in the quick arrests of members of the Sureno 13 street gang, involved in an assault, with baseball bats, on members of the same gang. One victim of the assault required 12 staples to close a head wound and a second victim suffered a broken hand and several other serious lacerations.

That case, as well as a late-2008 gang-related arson investigation, highlights the need for continuing vigilance by Gang Task Force Investigators. And while these cases may point to the escalation of gang violence in the region, it is important to note that the Northwest Gang Task Force's proactive approach to enforcement likely has reduced serious incidents of aggression.

In an effort to continue to provide quality gang enforcement in the region, the Board is requesting one million dollars in gang funding for FY10. Already, the Board is evaluating the future needs of the Gang Task Force. In addition to supporting wages and benefits for Investigators assigned to the Gang unit, FY10 funding would provide additional educational material for each participating jurisdiction. By FY10, updating technology will be a crucial element to enhancing Gang enforcement efforts, and to that end, cameras, computers, and other technologically advanced monitoring equipment will be needed. Also among our requests would be funding for translation services, which would lessen burdens on local budgets.

Lastly, the Strasburg Police Department, which is a member of our Drug Task Force, has indicated interest in also participating in the Gang Task Force. A formal request, approved by the Command Board, would result in the need for additional funding for manpower in 2010.

Again, members of the Command Board are greatly appreciative of your efforts on behalf of the Gang Task Force.

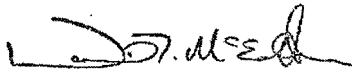
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If there are questions or concerns about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. McEathron", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sheriff Daniel T. McEathron

Chairman/NWVARDTF/NWVARGTF

SHERIFFDTMCE:dcb